



Countywide Community Forums

Round 2:

Citizen Priorities for County Government: Budget & Strategic Options

General Report

Countywide Community Forums: Citizen Priorities for County Government: Strategic and Budget Options

Countywide Community Forums is a network of periodic public forums where people gather in small groups throughout King County to discuss current issues and provide feedback to county government and other public officials. The program is run by volunteers, overseen by the King County Auditor's Office and uses techniques and software developed by the Forum Foundation. For more information on the Countywide Community Forums, check www.kingcounty.gov/operations/auditor. The data included in this report was generated from 58 forums organized between February 19 and March 22, 2009.

All forum participants

All forum participants

Demographic Data

(D-1) Over your lifetime, how long have you lived or worked in King County?

Answer

Total	406	
I have never lived or worked in King County	1	0%
Less than 5 years	31	8%
5-9 years	35	9%
10-19 years	85	21%
20 years or more	252	62%
Not Identified	2	0%

(D-2) What is your Gender?

Answer

Total	406	
Male	217	53%
Female	186	46%
Not Identified	3	1%

(D-3) What is your Age Range?

Answer

Total	406	
10-19 years	23	6%
20-29 years	24	6%
30-39 years	40	10%
40-49 years	71	17%
50-59 years	111	27%
60-69 years	90	22%
70-79 years	36	9%
80 years or older	9	2%
Not Identified	2	0%

(D-4) What is your primary Racial or Ethnic Heritage?

Answer

Total	406	
American Indian or Alaska Native (non-Hispanic)	3	1%

Asian (non-Hispanic)	11	3%
Black or African American (non-Hispanic)	11	3%
Hispanic or Latino/Latina	4	1%
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)	3	1%
White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic)	312	77%
Blended Racial Heritage (non-Hispanic)	27	7%
Other Heritage	15	4%
Not Identified	20	5%

(D-5) What is your primary Employment Status?

Answer

Total	406	
Self-Employed or Business Owner	86	21%
Work for any For-Profit Business	94	23%
Work for any Non-Profit Organization	26	6%
Work for any City Government	7	2%
Work for any County Government	22	5%
Work for WA State, Federal or Tribal Government	9	2%
Work for any Educational Institution	15	4%
Student	23	6%
Unemployed and seeking work	20	5%
Homemaker, Volunteer, Retired, Disabled or otherwise not employed	99	24%
Not Identified	5	1%

(D-6) What is the highest level of Education you have completed?

Answer

Total	406	
Grades 1-8	1	0%
Some High School	23	6%
High School Graduate (including GED)	11	3%
Some College or Technical School	54	13%
Technical School Graduate or Two-year College Graduate	24	6%
Four-year College Graduate	104	26%
Some Post-Graduate Education	52	13%
Post Graduate Degree (Masters, Ph.D., M.D., J.D., etc.)	127	31%
Not Identified	10	2%

(D-7) What is your primary Household Family Description?

Answer

Total	406	
Single Parent with children	18	4%
Dual Parent with children	89	22%
Extended Family sharing one home	13	3%
Single-person household	68	17%
Living with a Roommate or Roommates	25	6%
Living with a Spouse or Companion	172	42%
Homeless with or without children or other family	0	0%
Other	12	3%
Not Identified	9	2%

(D-8) Did you vote in the most recent Presidential election?

Answer

	Total	
	406	
No. I am not eligible to vote.	22	5%
No. However, I just became eligible and plan to vote in the future.	4	1%
No. However, I'm eligible and could have voted if I wanted to.	4	1%
Yes. I have voted in all elections since becoming eligible, with very few exceptions.	329	81%
Yes. I have voted in at least half of the elections since becoming eligible.	26	6%
Yes. However, I have voted in less than half of the elections since becoming eligible to vote.	8	2%
eligible to vote.	2	0%
Other	0	0%
Not Identified	11	3%

(D-9) Have you engaged in any of the following forms of community involvement over the last 12

Answer

Total	
406	
Yes, all three.	188 46%
Yes, two of the three.	89 22%
Yes, one of the three.	90 22%
No	25 6%
Other	3 1%
Not Identified	11 3%

(D-10) How informed are you about the general topic of “Budget Priorities & Strategic Options for King County?”

Answer

Total	
406	
Very well informed	36 9%
Somewhat well informed	107 26%
Informed	107 26%
Somewhat uninformed	111 27%
Not informed at all	34 8%
Not Identified	11 3%

(D-11) If you live in King County, who is your King County Councilmember?

Answer

Total	
406	
Bob Ferguson (district #1)	40 10%
Larry Gossett (district #2)	56 14%
Kathy Lambert (district #3)	42 10%
Larry Phillips (district #4)	58 14%
Julia Patterson (district #5)	25 6%
Jane Hague (district #6)	46 11%
Pete von Reichbauer (district #7)	17 4%
Dow Constantine (district #8)	40 10%
Reagan Dunn (district #9)	42 10%
I work in King County but live elsewhere	6 1%
Not Identified	34 8%

(D-12 & 13): Please indicate whether you live in unincorporated King County, or in one of King County's 39 cities?

Unincorporated King County (00)	57
Algona(01)	1
Auburn(02)	1
Beaux Arts Village(03)	2
Bellevue(04)	29
Black Diamond(05)	1
Bothell(06)	8
Burien(07)	3
Carnation(08)	2
Clyde Hill(09)	
Covington(10)	1
Des Moines(11)	4
Duvall(12)	
Enumclaw(13)	1
Federal Way(14)	9
Hunts Point(15)	
Issaquah(16)	9
Kenmore(17)	6
Kent(18)	15
Kirkland(19)	8
Lake Forest Park(20)	2
Maple Valley(21)	6
Medina(22)	1
Mercer Island(23)	8
Milton(24)	
Newcastle(25)	4
Normandy Park(26)	2
North Bend(27)	1
Pacific(28)	
Redmond(29)	7
Renton(30)	10
Sammamish(31)	7
SeaTac(32)	1
Seattle(33)	145
Shoreline(34)	12
Skykomish(35)	
Snoqualmie(36)	
Tukwila(37)	2
Woodinville(38)	2
Yarrow Point(39)	

(D-14 & 15) Please indicate the state legislative district in King County where you live?

Legislative District 1(01)	7
Legislative District 5(05)	45

Legislative District 11.....(11)	5
Legislative District 30.....(30)	11
Legislative District 31.....(31)	3
Legislative District 32.....(32)	18
Legislative District 33.....(33)	17
Legislative District 34.....(34)	28
Legislative District 36(36)	46
Legislative District 37(37)	28
Legislative District 39(39)	
Legislative District 41(41)	41
Legislative District 43(43)	40
Legislative District 45(45)	19
Legislative District 46(46)	19
Legislative District 47(47)	6
Legislative District 48(48)	24

Strategic considerations for the King County region

Percent

1) (T-1 through T-14) The current economic situation will require all government-provided services to be reviewed.

Spend a lot MORE money (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Spend a lot LESS money

What is your opinion about the current level of expenditure by King County and/or the different layers of (T-1) Economic development

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	6%
2	16%
3 - Just about right	33%
4	17%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	12%
Abstain	15%
Object	2%

(T-2) Infrastructure maintenance (roads, bridges, sewer, utility grid, etc.)

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	18%
2	35%
3 - Just about right	29%
4	9%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	2%
Abstain	7%
Object	1%

(T-3) New Roads

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	10%
2	17%
3 - Just about right	28%
4	18%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	20%
Abstain	5%
Object	1%

(T-4) Public Transportation

Answer

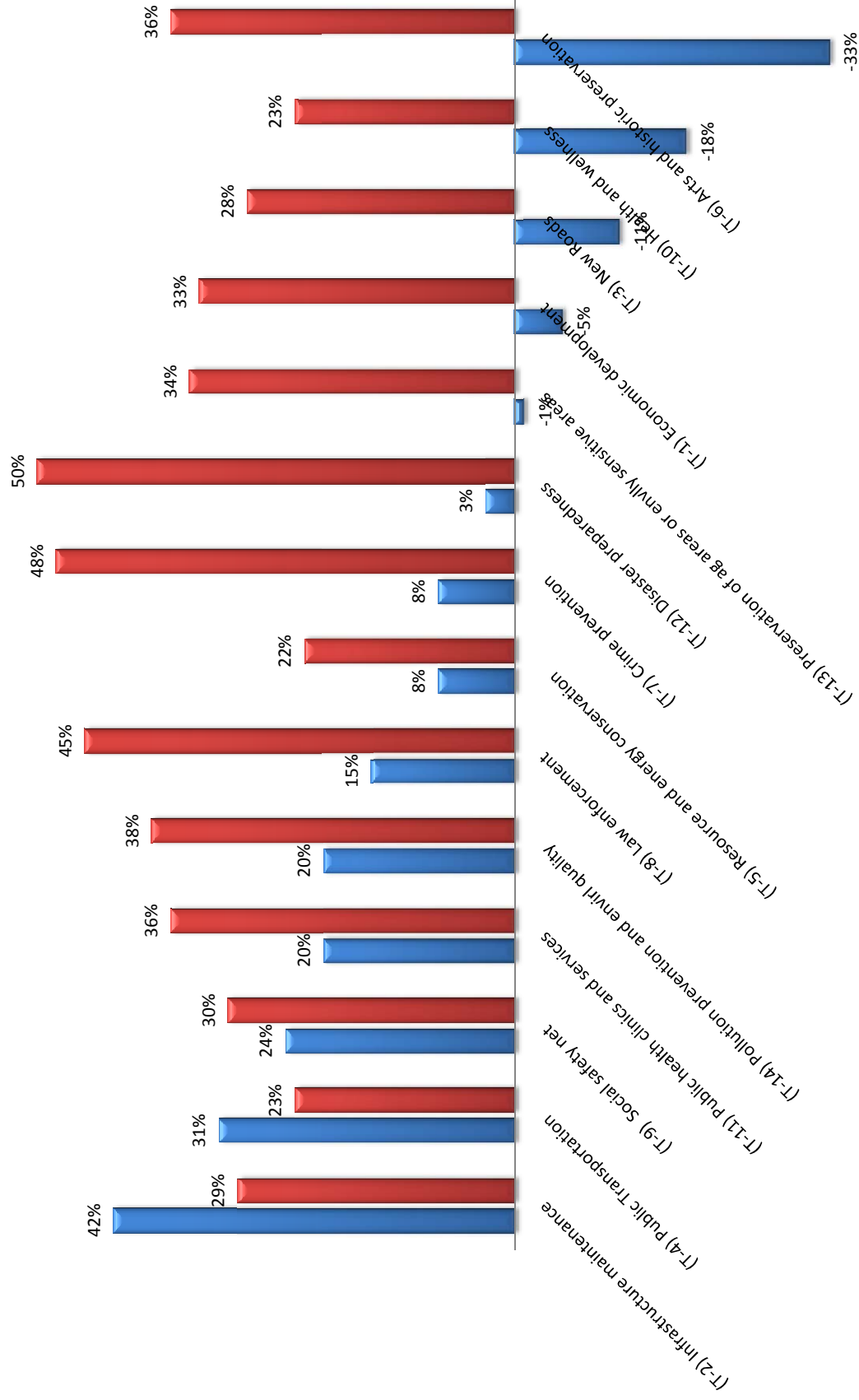
1 - Spend a lot MORE	23%
2	29%
3 - Just about right	23%
4	11%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	10%
Abstain	3%
Object	1%

(T-5) Resource and energy conservation (green building, recycling, alternative energy, etc.)

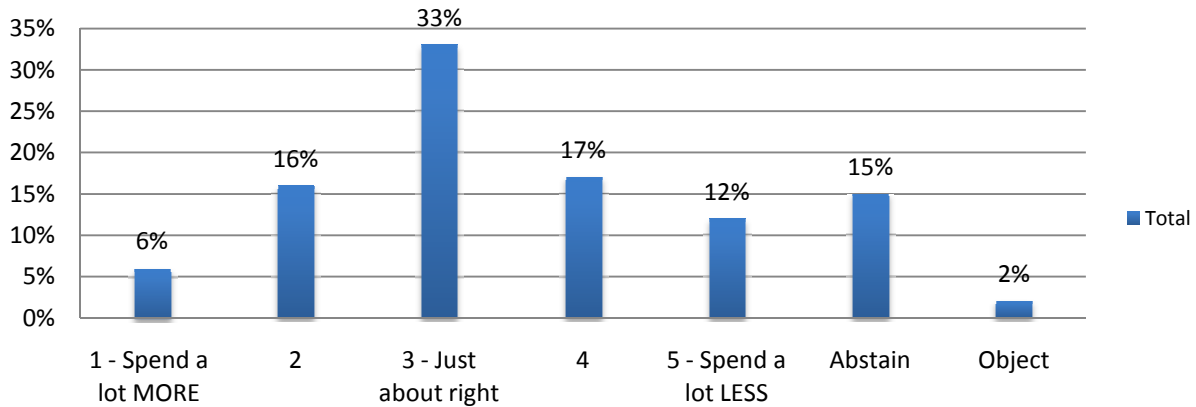
Answer

Citizen Priorities for County Government

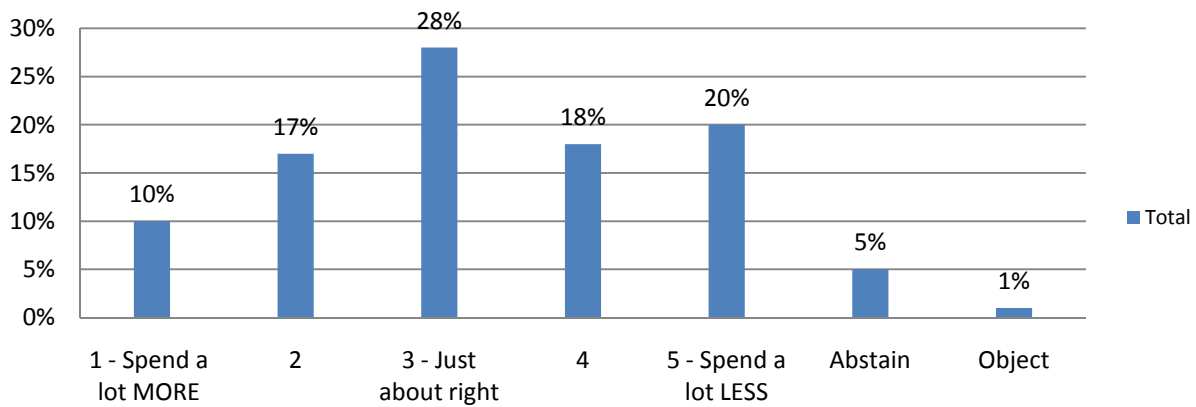
■ Net support for spending more ■ Satisfied with current level of spending



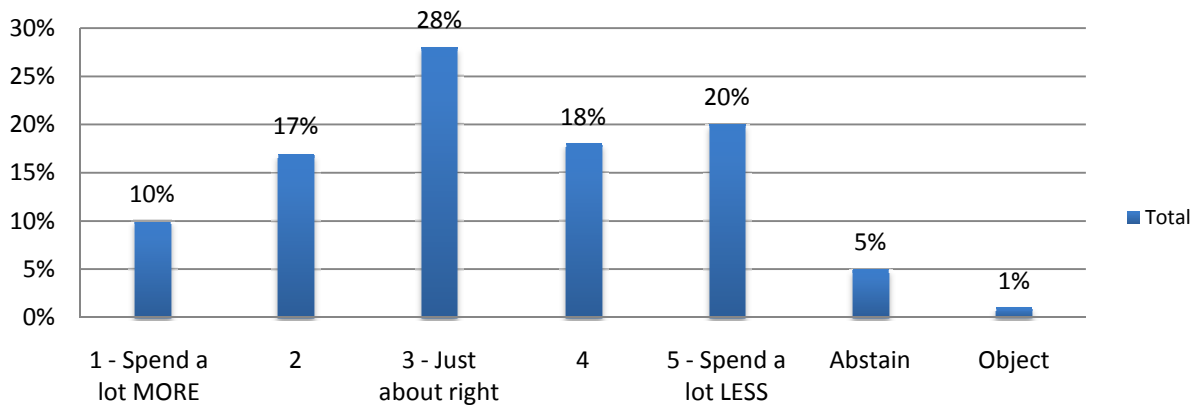
Economic Development



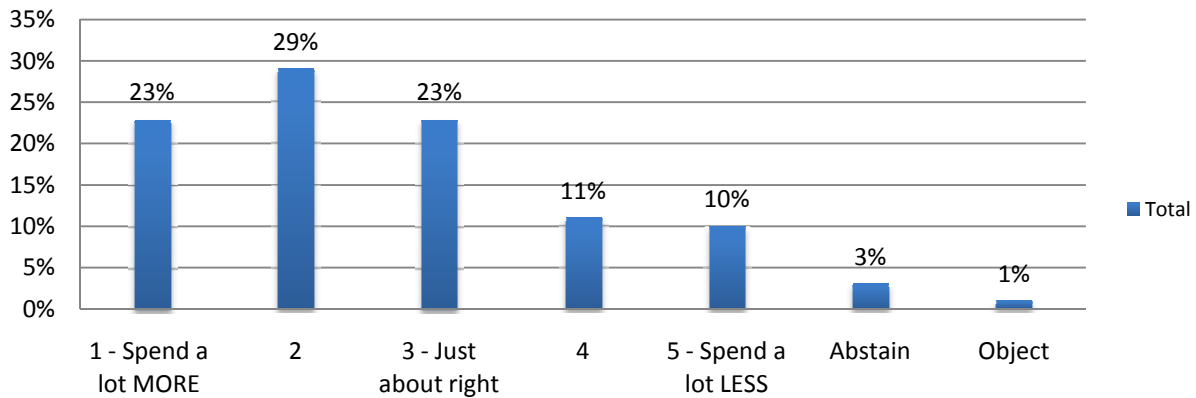
Infrastructure Maintenance



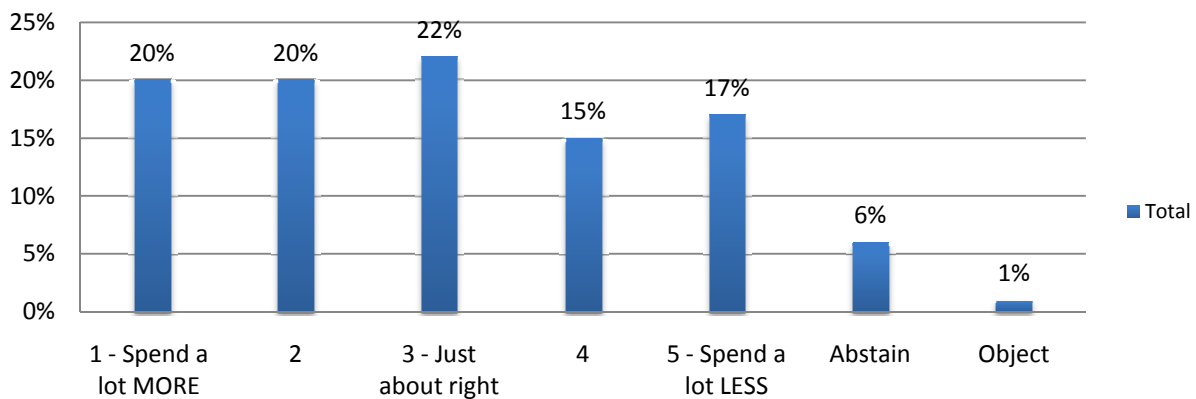
New Roads



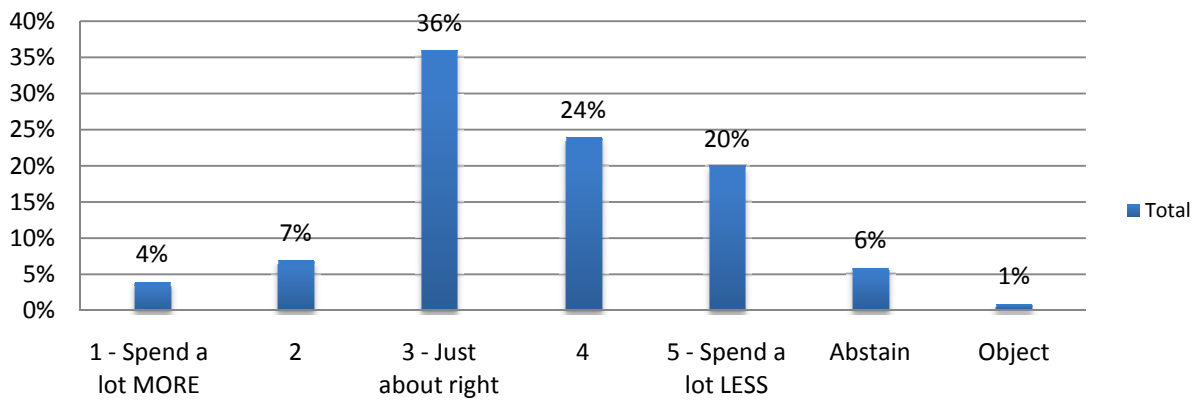
Public Transportation



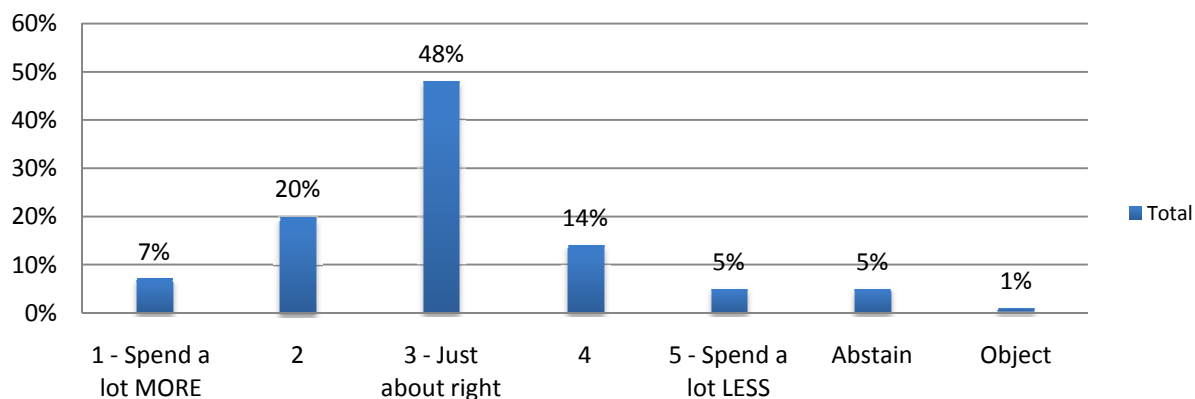
Resource & Energy Conservation



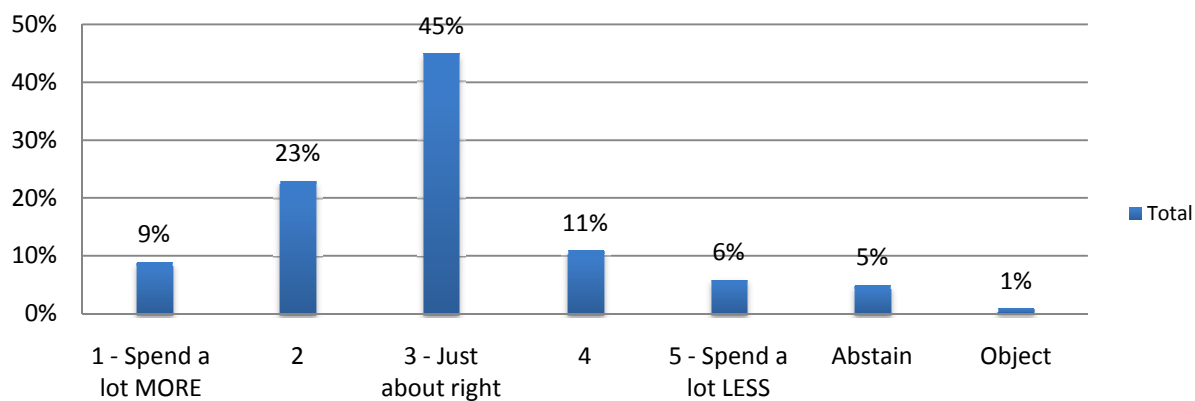
Arts & Historic Preservation



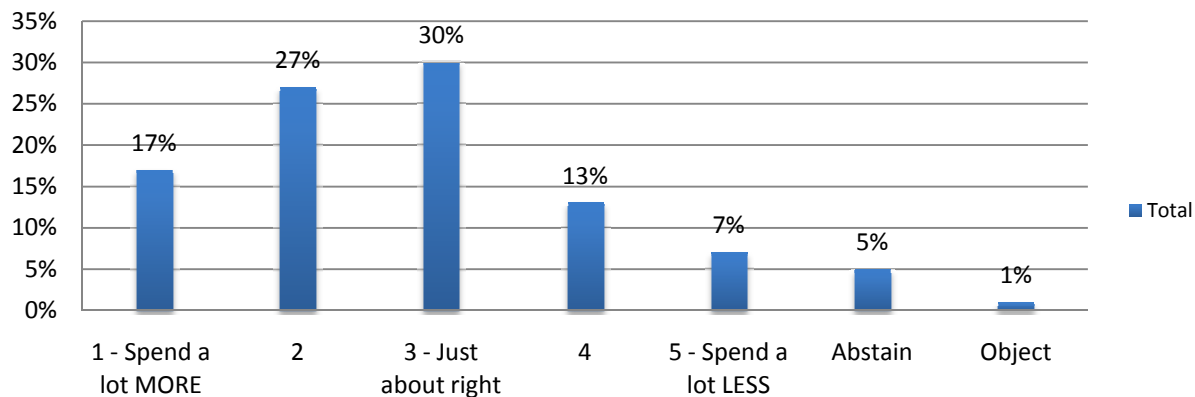
Crime Prevention



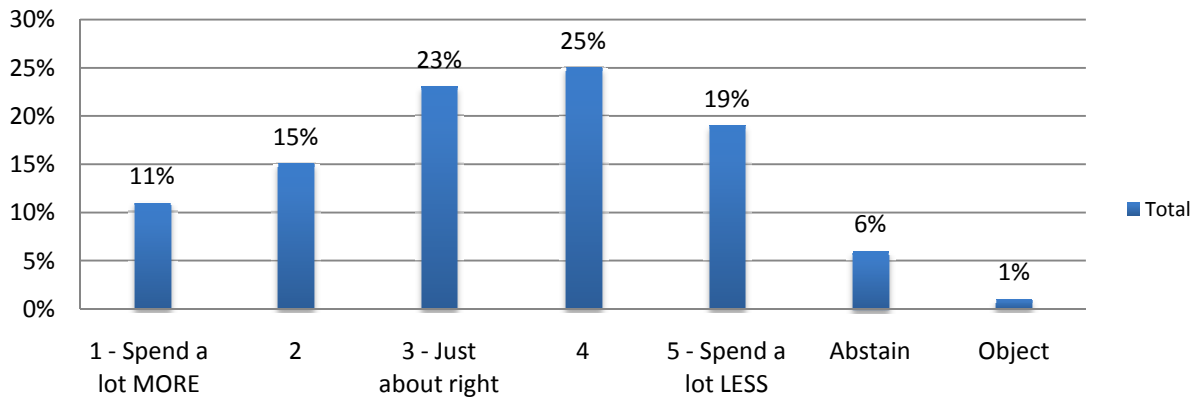
Law Enforcement



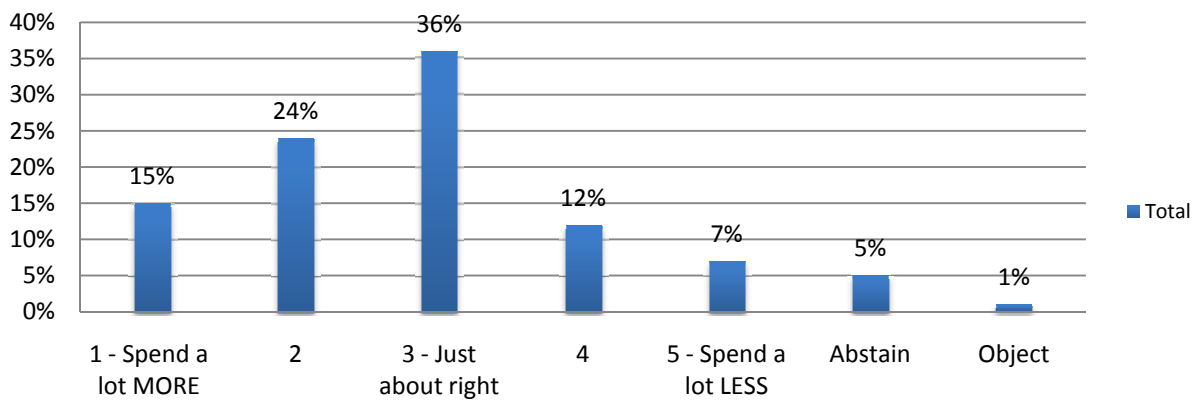
Social Safety Net



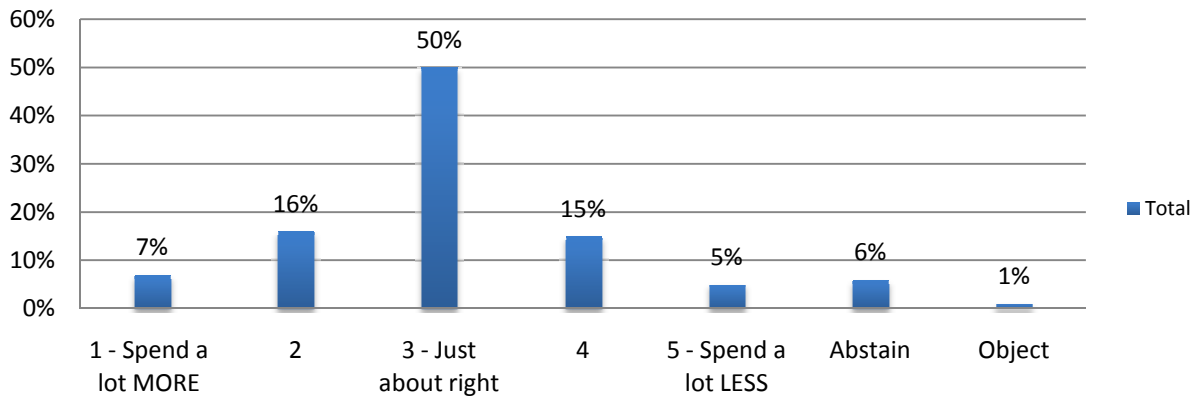
Health & Wellness



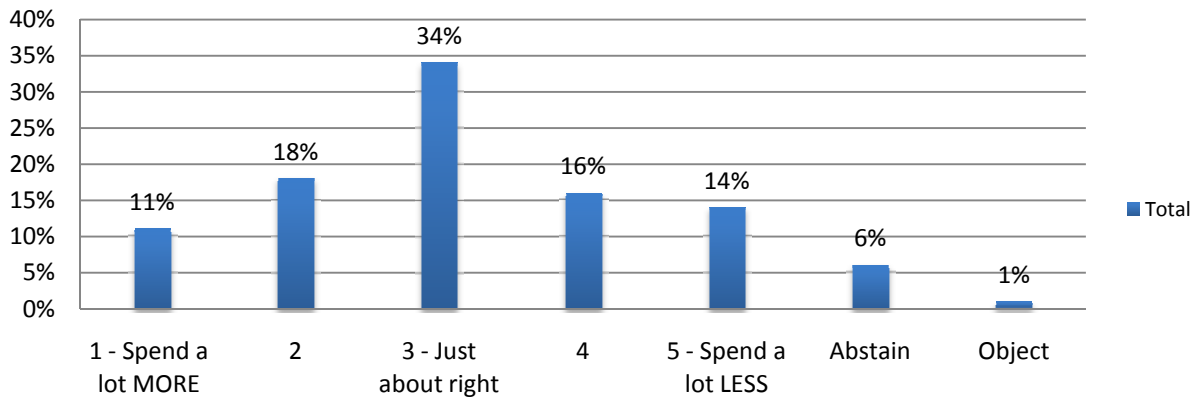
Public Health Clinics & Services



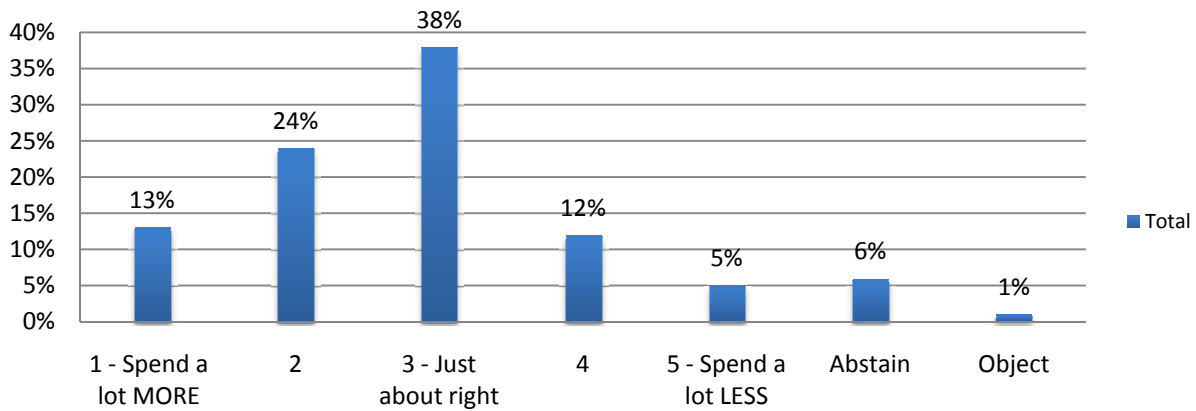
Disaster Preparedness



Preservation of Land (ag. & sensitive)



Pollution Prevention & Envl Quality



1 - Spend a lot MORE	20%
2	20%
3 - Just about right	22%
4	15%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	17%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-6) Arts and historic preservation

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	4%
2	7%
3 - Just about right	36%
4	24%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	20%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-7) Crime prevention (block watch, Community Service Officers, anti-bullying training, etc.)

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	7%
2	20%
3 - Just about right	48%
4	14%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	5%
Abstain	5%
Object	1%

(T-8) Law enforcement (incident response, patrol presence, detectives, etc.)

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	9%
2	23%
3 - Just about right	45%
4	11%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	6%
Abstain	5%
Object	1%

(T-9) Social safety net (food banks, emergency care, programs for the elderly)

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	17%
2	27%
3 - Just about right	30%
4	13%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	7%
Abstain	5%
Object	1%

(T-10) Health and wellness (nutrition, overweight prevention, walkability index, etc)

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	11%
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2	15%
3 - Just about right	23%
4	25%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	19%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-11) Public health clinics and services

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	15%
2	24%
3 - Just about right	36%
4	12%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	7%
Abstain	5%
Object	1%

(T-12) Disaster preparedness

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	7%
2	16%
3 - Just about right	50%
4	15%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	5%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-13) Preservation of agricultural areas or environmentally sensitive areas

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	11%
2	18%
3 - Just about right	34%
4	16%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	14%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-14) Pollution prevention and environmental quality (water quality, wastewater treatment, flood control, air

Answer

1 - Spend a lot MORE	13%
2	24%
3 - Just about right	38%
4	12%
5 - Spend a lot LESS	5%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

Budget Options for the King County region

Public Safety

(T-15) *Please rate how safe you feel in your community today.*

Very safe (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Very unsafe

Answer

1 - Very safe	33%
2	33%
3	22%
4	6%
5 - Very unsafe	2%
Abstain	3%
Object	1%

(T-16) *Are you feeling safer living or working today in King County than five years ago? Please "abstain" if you*

Much safer today (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Much less safe today

Answer

1 - Much safer	4%
2	13%
3	54%
4	16%
5 - Much less safe	4%
Abstain/less than 5 yrs in KC	8%
Object	1%

(T-17) *In your opinion, should we move toward more regional (countywide) services or more local (city) control of*

More Regional Services (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) More Local Services

Answer

1 - More regional services	40%
2	17%
3	15%
4	9%
5 - More local services	12%
Abstain	6%
Object	0%

(T-18) *In your opinion, how adequate is the level of public safety services offered today in King County compared to*

Very adequate (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Very inadequate

Answer

1 - Very adequate	7%
2	21%
3	36%
4	17%

5 - Very inadequate	3%
Abstain	11%
Object	4%

Health & Human Services

(T-19) *In your opinion, how adequate is the level of health and human services offered today in King County*

Very adequate (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Very inadequate

Answer

1 - Very adequate	13%
2	15%
3	30%
4	23%
5 - Very inadequate	7%
Abstain	8%
Object	3%

(T-20) *Should there be a “secure, stable and adequate” funding source for health and human services in King*

(1) Yes. King County should ask voters to consider a special property tax levy for that purpose, in the same way that voters approved a special property tax levy to support King County Parks.	12%
(2) Yes. King County should ask the State Legislature to allow King County voters to consider a special sales tax levy for that purpose.	12%
(3) Yes. King County should divert a specific percentage of existing taxes for this purpose even though that would lower services in other areas.	17%
(4) Yes. King County should ask the legislature to allow voters to consider other taxes - not sales or property taxes.	18%
(5) No. Providing health and human services is not a core function of King County. Those services should be funded by state, federal and/or charitable agencies, even if this results in a lower level of services.	28%

Lifeboat Strategy

(T-21) *How much will you be impacted personally if funding is not found to pay for the programs currently in the*

Big Personal Impact (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) No Personal Impact

Answer

1 - Big personal impact	7%
2	10%
3	13%
4	20%
5 - No personal impact	40%
Abstain	6%
Object	5%

Budgeting Process, Annexation & Taxes

(T-22) *What do you believe is the single biggest problem with King County's current budget situation with respect to*

(1) Growth in countywide property taxes is limited to 1%/year (not including taxes on new construction).	10%
(2) Unlike cities, King County is not allowed to levy "Business & Occupation" taxes and utility taxes on residents of unincorporated areas.	11%
(3) The County's "rainy day" reserve is too small.	5%
(4) The County's expenditures are growing faster than its revenues.	54%
(5) Other	11%
Abstain	7%
Object	2%

(T-23) Please indicate your #1 priority here:

(1) During good economic times, increasing the "rainy day" reserve from \$15 million to at least \$50 million.	15%
(2) Raising the current limit on the growth of countywide property taxes from 1% to 3% or the average level of inflation.	10%
(3) Giving the County the same taxing authority over residents of unincorporated areas that the 39 cities in King County have over city residents (i.e., the authority to levy utility taxes and "Business & Occupation" taxes).	25%
(4) Adopting a strict limit on the growth of overall County spending (such as the rate of inflation in the previous year, plus or minus x%), even if it reduces or limits core county services.	34%
(5) Other	8%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

(T-24) Please indicate your #2 priority here:

(1) During good economic times, increasing the "rainy day" reserve from \$15 million to at least \$50 million.	30%
(2) Raising the current limit on the growth of countywide property taxes from 1% to 3% or the average level of inflation.	11%
(3) Giving the County the same taxing authority over residents of unincorporated areas that the 39 cities in King County have over city residents (i.e., the authority to levy utility taxes and "Business & Occupation" taxes).	16%
(4) Adopting a strict limit on the growth of overall County spending (such as the rate of inflation in the previous year, plus or minus x%), even if it reduces or limits core county services.	20%
(5) Other	12%
Abstain	8%
Object	3%

(T-25) Please indicate your #3 priority here:

(1) During good economic times, increasing the "rainy day" reserve from \$15 million to at least \$50 million.	21%
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(2) Raising the current limit on the growth of countywide property taxes from 1% to 3% or the average level of inflation.	11%
(3) Giving the County the same taxing authority over residents of unincorporated areas that the 39 cities in King County have over city residents (i.e., the authority to levy utility taxes and “Business & Occupation” taxes).	15%
(4) Adopting a strict limit on the growth of overall County spending (such as the rate of inflation in the previous year, plus or minus x%), even if it reduces or limits core county services.	14%
(5) Other	15%
Abstain	17%
Object	6%

26) (T-26) <i>Should the state Legislature authorize King County to raise more local taxes</i> (such as authorizing the	
(1) Yes	34%
(2) No	54%
Abstain	7%
Object	6%

27) (T-27) <i>Should the state Legislature give King County more flexibility in how it uses its existing local taxes</i> (such	
(1) Yes	66%
(2) No	22%
Abstain	7%
Object	5%

(T-28) <i>Which ONE of these things do you think will have the greatest impact on increasing efficiencies in King</i>	
(1) More performance audits of existing programs to uncover problems or inefficiencies.	15%
(2) More public-private partnerships and/or privatization of County programs.	12%
(3) More measurable objectives for specific programs to promote accountability and better management.	19%
(4) Look for ways to consolidate or combine programs or functions.	42%
(5) Other	6%
Abstain	6%
Object	1%

29) (T-29) <i>What portion of the local sales tax collected by cities should the County get?</i>	
(1) The County should get more than 15% of the city’s portion.	23%
(2) 15% of the city’s portion for the County is about right.	42%
(3) The County should get less than 15% of the city’s portion.	8%

(4) Other	4%
Abstain	19%
Object	3%

30) (T-30) *Should more county services be provided with dedicated property tax or sales tax levies?*

(1) Yes	29%
(2) No	54%
Abstain	14%
Object	4%

(T-31) *Should cities be required to annex adjacent “urbanized” areas so that the County can focus its efforts on*

(1) Yes	55%
(2) No	34%
Abstain	10%
Object	1%

(T-32) *Should the County have the same power to levy the same taxes on residents of the “unincorporated” areas of*

(1) Yes	64%
(2) No	26%
Abstain	9%
Object	1%

(T-33) In the most recent budget, the King County Council identified “Public Safety, Public Health and Supports very well (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Doesn't support at all

Answer

1 - Supports very well	3%
2	11%
3	27%
4	21%
5 - Doesn't support at all	5%
Abstain	31%
Object	2%

Please indicate the extent to which you would support or oppose the following tax increase:

(T-34) **Property taxes**

Definitely support (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Definitely oppose

Answer

1 - Definitely support	9%
2	10%
3	13%
4	16%
5 - Definitely oppose	44%
Abstain	7%

Object	1%
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(T-35) **Sales taxes**

Definitely support (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Definitely oppose

Answer

1 - Definitely support	8%
2	10%
3	13%
4	18%
5 - Definitely oppose	42%
Abstain	7%
Object	1%

(T-36) **Utility taxes on residents of "unincorporated" areas**

Definitely support (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Definitely oppose

Answer

1 - Definitely support	29%
2	22%
3	14%
4	7%
5 - Definitely oppose	17%
Abstain	8%
Object	1%

(T-37) **Business & Occupation taxes on firms in "unincorporated" areas**

Definitely support (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Definitely oppose

Answer

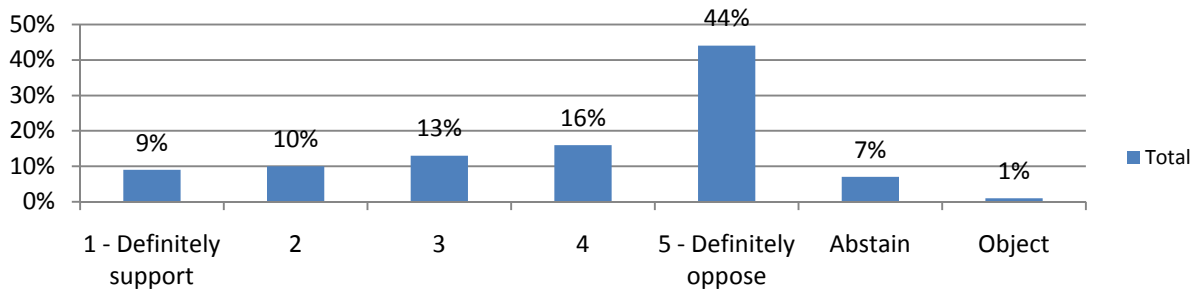
1 - Definitely support	28%
2	23%
3	15%
4	7%
5 - Definitely oppose	19%
Abstain	8%
Object	1%

(T-38) **Other**

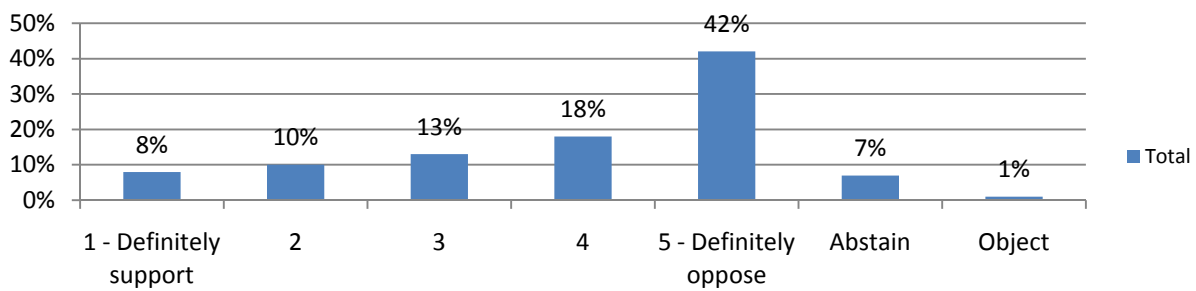
(T-39) *ASSUMING that the County's elected leaders decided in the future that it was again necessary to*

(1) Lay off employees	11%
(2) Implement unpaid "furlough days" for employees	34%
(3) Reduce wages	14%
(4) Reduce health insurance or other employee benefits	21%
(5) Other	7%

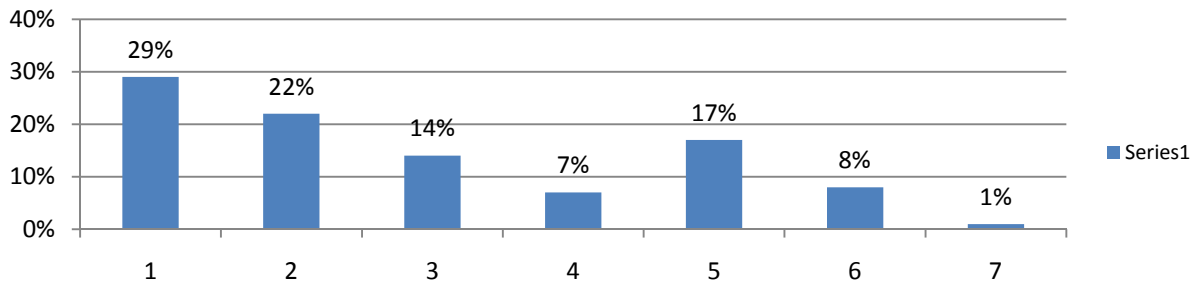
Property Tax Increase



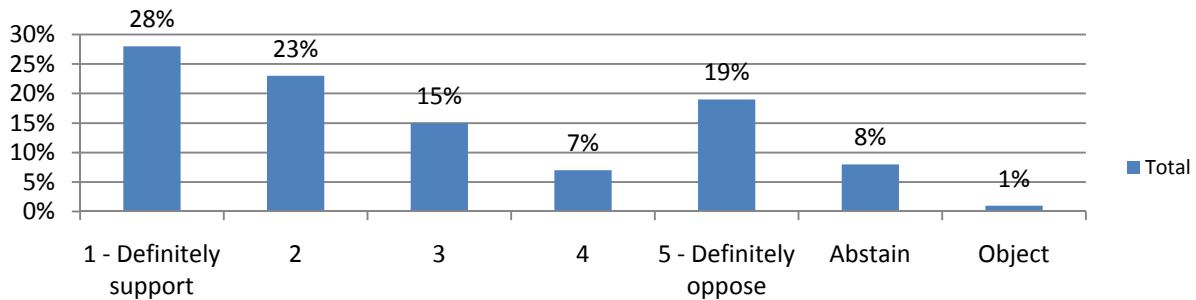
Sales Tax Increase



Utility Tax in UKC



B&O Tax in UKC



Abstain	9%
Object	2%

(T-40) *Other than your participation in the Countywide Community Forums, have you used any of the*

(1) Writing, calling or emailing King County elected officials (e.g. Councilmembers, the Executive, the Sheriff, the Prosecutor, etc.).	19%
(2) Participating in an official King County public hearing, town hall meeting, or similar public forum.	12%
(3) Writing a letter to the editor of a local newspaper.	4%
(4) Working with an alliance of service providers or advocacy group (e.g., The King County Alliance for Human Services).	3%
(5) Other	14%
Abstain / Haven't used any of the mechanisms	46%
Object	1%

Process Questions

(P-1) **What topic would you like to discuss** in future *Countywide Community Forums* ?

(1) A specific transportation proposal, such as how best to replace the SR-520 (“Evergreen Point”) bridge, how best to improve Metro Transit bus service or something else (please specify in the ANSWER COLUMN).	
(2) Environmental protection in King County	22%
(3) Tax Reform in King County	13%
(4) Public Safety and the Justice System in King County	25%
(5) Other	23%
Abstain	8%
Object	0%

42) (P-2) *Have you ever testified at a King County public hearing or Town Hall meeting?*

(1) Yes	23%
(2) No	73%
Abstain	4%
Object	0%

(P-3) *Did you participate in Round #1 of the Countywide Community Forums on the topic of*

(1) Yes	45%
(2) No. I only recently found out about the forums.	21%
(3) No. I knew about the forums, but was not interested in the topic.	3%
(4) No. I wanted to attend, but was not able to.	26%
(5) Other	1%
Abstain	3%
Object	0%

(P-4) *Did participating in the discussion today with fellow citizen councilors make a difference on how you*

(1) Yes. Talking about the issue at today’s forum helped me see other perspectives, and I responded differently than I would have before this meeting on some questions because of the new perspective I now have.	31%
(2) Yes. Talking about the issue at today’s forum helped me see other perspectives but did not change how I responded on any of the questions.	26%
(3) No. I really did not learn anything new on the issue at today’s forum because everyone agreed on all of the issues.	3%
(4) No. I really did not learn anything new on the issue at today’s forum because I disagreed with the view of the other citizen councilors.	1%
(5) No. I really did not learn anything new on the issue from today’s forum because we never really talked about the issues.	4%

Abstain	34%
Object	1%

(P-5) *How do you rate the information presented in the 20-minute “Budget & Strategic Options” video?*

(1) Excellent	13%
(2) Good	40%
(3) Fair or average	15%
(4) Poor	6%
(5) Very poor	2%
Abstain	23%
Object	1%

46) (P-6) *In general, do you think the 20-minute “Budget & Strategic Options” video was **fair and even***

(1) Very fair and even handed	30%
(2) Somewhat fair and even handed	31%
(3) Somewhat biased	11%
(4) Very biased	2%
Abstain	25%
Object	1%

(P-7) *How well did the questions in this Opinionnaire® address the topic of “Budget & Strategic Options in*

(1) All major issues were covered	10%
(2) Most major issues were covered	55%
(3) Most major issues were NOT covered	9%
(4) None of the major issues were covered	1%
(5) Other	6%
Abstain	17%
Object	1%

48) (P-8) *Did you think the length of this Opinionnaire® has been:*

(1) About right	70%
(2) Too long	17%
(3) Too short	3%
(4) Other	1%
Abstain	8%
Object	0%

49) (P-9) How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement, “Overall, I believe the
Strongly Agree (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Strongly Disagree

Answer	
Total	

1 - Strongly agree	38%
2	30%
3	18%
4	4%
5 - Strongly disagree	2%
Abstain	7%
Object	0%

Citizen Councilor Comments

(T-20) *Should there be a "secure, stable and adequate" funding source for health and human services in King County?*

- (1) Yes. King County should ask voters to consider a special property tax levy for that purpose, in the same way that voters approved a special property tax levy to support King County Parks.
 - (2) Yes. King County should ask the State Legislature to allow King County voters to consider a special sales tax levy for that purpose.
 - (3) Yes. King County should divert a specific percentage of existing taxes for this purpose even though that would lower services in other areas.
 - (4) Yes. King County should ask the legislature to allow voters to consider other taxes - not sales or property taxes.
 - (5) No. Providing health and human services is not a core function of King County. Those services should be funded by state, federal and/or charitable agencies, even if this results in a lower level of services.
- (5) Note: too many conditions attached to the "no" answer (biased). Example: "even if...." I agreed with some of the answer, but would not myself have used that reasoning as to why or that it would have to be all or nothin. (State / county structure)*
- Helping people in need should not be a chance proposition based on a levy. Minimum standards should be developed and funded allowing those in need to have a chance to exit their challenges*
- A levy is not a reliable source of revenue for permanent programs. Raise existing taxes, don't use a levy*
- A state income tax would be good!*
- (5) 1,2,3 - they should do all three*
- (5) By charitable organizations only!*

(T-22) *What do you believe is the single biggest problem with King County's current budget situation with respect to the General Fund?*

- (1) Growth in countywide property taxes is limited to 1%/year (not including taxes on new construction).
 - (2) Unlike cities, King County is not allowed to levy "Business & Occupation" taxes and utility taxes on residents of unincorporated areas.
 - (3) The County's "rainy day" reserve is too small.
 - (4) The County's expenditures are growing faster than its revenues.
 - (5) Other
- Abstain
- Object
- (5) Entire system needs changing. Tax out of town corporations*
- Large corporations are not required to pay their fair share of taxes*
- The county gives up revenues from areas that are low cost when piecemeal annexation picks off the "low hanging fruits" of urban areas*
- (4) Spending too much! Inefficient!*
- Review needs, adjust spending to match revenue. Look for ways to save money, i.e. raises, bonus, unnecessary parts as programs, etc.*
- (5) criminal justice takes too much out of the budget*
- Poor tax structure*
- Annexation of urban areas needs to proceed (or incorporation sometime)*
- No income tax*
- Current tax structure can't keep up - need to implement state income tax.*
- County taxing authority too limited*
- I think 1, 3, and 4 play important roles in budget situation. But I think the biggest problems are the lack of a progressive state income tax and that the county has so little discretionary funds*
- (5) There is not a completely thought out plan for what is the county's responsibilities and cities' responsibilities. We need an equivalent to the Gates Commission to examine city and county revenues and expenditures*

(5) *Prioritization in spending *Mismanagement of Departments *Levy-fication of what should be core services *Too much emphasis on Justice services *Too high % of budget dedicated/inflexible *Need for examination of privatization and criminal process as they relate to the law/safety/justice budget *Lack of foresight - need for services related to foreclosures & jobless currently escalating

(5) The county doesn't have access to a diverse funding set. Need more options to tax, especially ones that are not regressive like sales & property.

NO accountability for wasteful spending

The "rainy day fund" should increase and only be used when budget shortfall exist at a level 2 years in arrears. E.g., today's fund is used when 2007 budget is not met.

All of the above + address lack of willingness for people to view services as necessary & to commit to pay for it.

(1) However, I don't think there is a single solution. It's a complex problem that needs a creative and long-term solution.

(4) Trying to be 2 things at once: local and regional government

Too much money is spent on KC employees salaries and benefits. Salaries - especially of Council members and Administrator - should be cut. All employee benefits should be lowered to match the KC citizens wages & benefits

(5) Some of the services provided by the County should be provided by state and federal agencies

(5) It needs to be re-engineered completely - too many inefficiencies

Unpredictable and recessive taxation process

We have no way of evaluating whether our money is being wasted. I have two examples of tens of millions of \$ wasted. No way of discussing it or getting public airing. Others have more.

Current funding sources are maxed out. We need to look at restructuring current funding at a lower level and adding an income tax as an additional funding source

Property & sales taxes are too vulnerable. Some form of income tax / state revenue sharing is more stable

Needs exceed current funding

(5) Nepotism, greed, overspending

Study of effective use of funds is needed

King County needs to do an audit of all job functions and employee reviews. If employees are not creating benefit, they need to be cut.

(5) Too much spending on things gov't should not be involved in.

(5) Spending money on non-core functions. BAD GOV'T!

County is funding too many discretionary activities

(object) There is no "third rail" for a comprehensive tax structure - income tax!

Stop funding the Port of Seattle

(5) The budget/charter was written in the 18th cent & has not kept up with modern realities

(4) In some instances, the funding method is archaic & inadequate. I don't want the "rainy day fund" to be used for planned funding

of employees should not outgrow population or budget. Incentives to save \$ should be encouraged & put back into county from 1 year to next -- a savings program, if you will.

(4) Unsustainable empire building

(4) Because of bad spending

(4) Not sure, but waste is a big problem.

Too much fund goes to Law / Justice. Lower that & there will be more for other areas

Wasteful - government is too large - wrong people in the wrong job

County does not prioritize, look to increase efficiencies and eliminate waste. Good outcomes are not required for programs.

My experience is that no one in the County understands result driven outcomes! No one checks, xxxxxxxxxx, unaccounted costs of programs to determine that they are doing and xxxxxxxx what they are to do.

Have to better prioritize what they fund and demand outcome that are measurable. Why fund Planned Parenthood? The Public Health Dept. can do most of that.

King County needs to reduce staff like business is doing

(5) We have a revenue generation system that is geared to fail during poor economic times, e.g. we are far too dependent on property taxes (constrained to a % and below inflation) and sales taxes.

(3) You can't crush us under property taxes

(5) should levy B&O tax

(5) King County should focus on law/ criminal justice & transportation parks AND infrastructure. Mental health healthcare, drug prevention, etc. belong at the city level of government.

(T-25) Please indicate your #1, 2, 3 priority here:

- (1) During good economic times, increasing the “rainy day” reserve from \$15 million to at least \$50 million.
- (2) Raising the current limit on the growth of countywide property taxes from 1% to 3% or the average level of inflation.
- (3) Giving the County the same taxing authority over residents of unincorporated areas that the 39 cities in King County have over city residents (i.e., the authority to levy utility taxes and “Business & Occupation” taxes).
- (4) Adopting a strict limit on the growth of overall County spending (such as the rate of inflation in the previous year, plus or minus x%), even if it reduces or limits core county services.
- (5) Other
- Abstain
- Object

#1 Priority:

(5) Change system! Tax out of town corporations

Identify a set of absolute "core" services and then implment a zero-based budget to manage expenditures for these services

(5) Ovehaul on state level the entire tax structure

Combination plus outsourcing

(1) Protected - can't spend until really dire

State income tax

(5) Engage public in creative conversation about what we really want & how we want to partner to fund it.

(5) Adopting a n intangibles tax to increase revenues and make the entire tax system more equitable.

(5) Income tax

(5) Reprioritization (w/ special examination of law/safety portion)

(5) luxury tax is not on here, plus you could lobby for state to have income tax

(5) State law Income Tax

Strong performance measures to support efficiency and accountability.

(4) x=2%

(5) work cooperatively with state and federal government, as well as cities

(5) Re-engineer the entire system - You're tweaking throwing \$\$ away in too many places - get some business acumen

Adopt fix level of tax for fix county costs

Pass state income tax

Restructure the revenue side. Income tax and elimtate all others

completely reorganize expenditure priorities

Adopt progressive state income tax

We need a state income tax, mixed with sales and property

Quit outsourcing work. Hire people who will stay. Lower wages can be negotiatied.

None: question is too simple

Study cost effectiveness of spending

(5) Gov't should only spend on what is required by law.

(5) Stick to core and chartered county functions only.

Eliminate discretionary activities

(5) Innovate and reform everywhere in County government; e.g. sheriff Rahr should coordinate all law enforcement services regionally to decrease duplication of services and facilities

(5) Institute a state income tax, but lower unemployment tax

(object): the only choice shouldn't be raise taxes. How about some real effort to be more efficient, prioritize and weed out waste

(5) A combination of (1) and (4) and looking at the cost per department employee, and ensuring that resources are allocated where they need to be. Close non-essential buildings and consolidate staff in existing buildings. Move the Executive back with the Council members.

Use systems approach to identify actual charter-prioritized responsibilities and then fund those.

(5) We need to institute an income tax that kicks in at a relatively high income level (e.g., \$250k). This should be accompanied by a reduction in our regressive sales tax.

(1) Plan ahead

(5) 3% of general fund for action oriented productivity improvement progress developing and implementing process improvements "Doing more with less"

#2 Priority:

(5) Tax out of town corporations

Setting statewide standard rates for taxing authority (w/ a 2-5 year transition/implementation period)

Income tax

Limit top salaries to 2x county median

(5) Control public employee unions

(5) being more efficient w/ County \$\$\$

State income tax

Adopting a spending limit without reducing core county services. Reduce Law, Safety and Justice spending.

(5) Maintain good government

(5) Income tax

(5) Increase flexibility in spending to accommodate changes in needs for certain services

(5) luxury tax, income tax.

Compensate County employees at same levels and same benefits as private sector employees

Examining performance of existing programs for possible efficiencies

(5) Lower salaries of KC administrators and councilmembers. Lower benefits - KC employees have the highest benefits in state. KC Administrator is one of the highest paid in country.

Remove arbitrary limits on taxing authority (e.g. as in #2)

Income tax

Bad question

Cut out employees and programs yearly that are no longer needed

(4) & (5) Prioritize your spending

Live within the budget

correcting labor inefficiencies & adjusting pay for public officials

Independent evaluation of county depts & programs to evaluate value - add & make cuts where needed

Study cost effectiveness of spending

(5) Gov't should only spend on what is required by law.

(5) Stick to core and chartered county functions only.

(5) Repeal victimless crimes

(object) Reduce spending

Stop funding the Port of Seattle

But only inside UGB

(abstain) list some others

(5) Create higher "luxury" taxes on tobacco & alcohol

County must adjust to revenue shortage as do its citizens. Raising taxes during tough economic times reduces economic growth. Salary reductions, layoffs, efficiency in spending need to be a priority during tough times

(object) See above (:the only choice shouldn't be raise taxes. How about some real effort to be more efficient, prioritize and weed out waste). The above is a tough job. The County has been ditching it for a long time.

Again, prioritize and look for real outcomes for programs

(5) A combination of (1) and (4) and looking at the cost per department employee, and ensuring that resources are allocated where they need to be. Close non-essential buildings and consolidate staff in existing buildings. Move the Executive back with the Council members.

(4) Spend wisely & for those in need

Advocate for a gas tax. Soon --- before prices go up. Get non-violent criminals out of jail or have them do more work to release.

(5) One-time business funded and volunteer staffed Blue Ribbon Commission looking for expenditure reductions that don't impact critical services

(5) Give B&O authority-not utility tax

(5) Increase effective ways to provide obligated services. When times are good you have time & \$ to try something new, invest in new technology to provide better roads, sewer, buses

#3 Priority:

(5) tax any corporation whose profits leave King County

Setting criteria for a rainy day fund based on percentages of surplus

Loosen up on EPA & Environmental Impact requirements so that it takes no more than 10% of construction budget. Reduce 1% for art to 1/2%.

(5) Privatize significant county services

(5) Control executive level spending and mismanagement

(5) Improve efficiency with technology & staffing too top heavy

(5) Re-organizing who pays for what services for people in our state. State, county, city, etc.

Promote fee for services (e.g. law enforcement) w/ small municipalities

State income tax

(5) looking at new ways to get the most of the dollar

Tax marijuana

(5) Income tax

(object) Strategies too limited - these are concepts that seem pre-approved... Some have discussed state income tax as possible buffer...

(5) Tax large personal motor vehicles (>4 litres & >4000 LBS)

(5) luxury tax, income tax.

Lower employment costs

Change from seniority-based to performance-based job security

Get state to require city contribution for human services delivered to city residents

Do not fund Art projects

County income tax for wealthiest individuals

Replace B&O tax with state income tax

Income tax mixed with sales and property

I don't like those choices - I think there may be better options not listed.

Bad question - too simple

(5) Luxury tax; lobby for income tax.

Live within the budget

Run King County services more efficiently and more effectively

Control labor costs - pension terms should not exceed those of major cities, e.g. Seattle

Study cost effectiveness of spending

Give King County authority to deal with unions if employees are not doing their job because they feel they cannot be fired due to union protection. There must be a review process and employees held accountable for their production/benefit.

(5) Gov't should only spend on what is required by law.

(5) Stick to core and chartered county functions only.

(5) Because benefit level for city employees, or is hard to accept the level of their benefit package

Reject Unon contracts

But only with vote of the people

(abstain) list some others

(5) Institute a gas and/or motor vehicle "surcharge" tax

(5) Unincorporated don't get services like Metro that are needed -- especially VASHON!

Cut spending more.

(5) None

(5) Hiring freeze & reduce size of bureaucracy by attrition. Too ____ big.

Change govt. structure to make more efficient

(object) see T22, 23 and 24

(5) A combination of (1) and (4) and looking at the cost per department employee, and ensuring that resources are allocated where they need to be. Close non-essential buildings and consolidate staff in existing buildings. Move the Executive back with the Council members.

Reduce expenses, reduce gov't, increase efficiency

Fire free-spending bureaucrats and hire people who respect my wallet and my rights.

(5) Strategically plan to consolidate services, limit luxuries & high pay jobs within the system

(T-27) Should the state Legislature give King County more flexibility in how it uses its existing local taxes (such as authorizing the county to use its existing "health & human services" levy to fund existing programs rather than just expand existing programs) to help King County avoid further cuts in services?

(1) Yes

(2) No

Abstain

Object

(object) generally the answer is Yes but some system of check and balance is needed

(object) alternatives are unclear

(1) Shouldn't involve levy issue (separate legal question) but increased flexibility is optimal

(object) not clean.

Too many options. I choose B&O only.

But only with vote of the people

**Urban subsidies *3 GP budgets: Regional, Local, Outside*

*cities *Sales tax equalization *Subsidies of other funds *Jails for county misdemeanor offenders*

(abstain) Not enough info.

(object) see T22, 23 & 24

Stop funding socialist programs

(object) poorly written question - confusing

*(T-28) Which **ONE** of these things do you think will have the greatest impact on increasing efficiencies in King County government?*

(1) More performance audits of existing programs to uncover problems or inefficiencies.

(2) More public-private partnerships and/or privatization of County programs.

(3) More measurable objectives for specific programs to promote accountability and better management.

(4) Look for ways to consolidate or combine programs or functions.

(5) Other

Abstain

Object

(5) Transparency on line & local access radio channels

(5) Stop overpaying poor managers & executives

impact on efficiencies ----- T39 labor costs ---- I would have liked to have a chance to prioritize and not just pick one and only one choice for those 2 items.

Prioritize (publicly) the programs instead of everything being labelled "important"

A careful delineation of responsibility (not just "goals", but which jobs are which agency's responsibility) among various gov't branches, agencies, and NGOs.

Also consolidate w/ cities & state

(object) are there inefficiencies? Who says? Is this proven?

Fewer tactics to raise various taxes instead of reducing costs

Audits and performance measures with outcomes tied to bonuses/penalties.

(5) reduce salaries & benefits of employees

(5) all of the above as you start over to re-engineer county gov't

But the audits must be transparent and open

Shift criminal justice funds to alternatives to incarceration

City & county consolidation would make a difference

Individuals in gov't funded organizations submit ideas for greater efficiencies/saving money for their organization

(1) This should happen first. Then the others, except #2: no privatization!

(5) only spend on what is required by law.

(5) Reduce spending to core and chartered functions

(5) Eliminate discretionary activities

(5) Freeze on salaries and co-pay on benefits

(5) a mix of options

(1), but how much does an audit cost?

Efficiently -- Disabled people should be sheltered, not on the street

5- All of those strategies should be utilized to improve efficiencies

Need outside experts to audit

(1) Real audits - deep, thorough, and including several years

* Ron Sims takes a pay cut.

* Ron Sims office NO longer leased in Columbia Tower

* County consolidate cost of

courts, jails, transportation

(T-33) In the most recent budget, the King County Council identified "Public Safety, Public Health and Quality of Life" as its most important priorities. *How well do you think the 2009 budget adopted by the County supports these priorities?*

Supports very well (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) Doesn't support at all

Answer

Total

1 - Supports very well

2

3

4

5 - Doesn't support at all

Abstain

Object

(4) Too much focus on jails, law enforcement and criminals. This is not the most effective or efficient way to reach safety. And public health was cut!!!!

(object) "quality of life" encompasses a lot and is budget-wise very difficult to relate to individual budget items/municipalities levels of gov.

(object) Don't know

(object) why is the county involved in Public Health? Define "Quality of Life".

(5) (Object) Budget was completely ineffective

Please indicate the extent to which you would support or oppose the following tax increase:

(T-38) Other

(1) Tax any national or international company. Protectionism!

1) Visitor and other non-resident taxes / 2) sin taxes

Income tax

Make even cuts in all services - let each dept decide on what to cut.

(1) Income tax

Graduated state income tax county income tax

Graduated state income tax

Levies

Income tax for state

Income tax

Look at reducing expenditures rather than increasing taxes.

(1) tax controled substances like marijuana

(1) Income tax

(5) intangibles tax

(1) Income tax

(5) (a) Legalize pot and (b)scale back spending in the wrong places

(1) vehicle excise tax, congestion tax, building permits

(2) Tax motor vehicle by weight

(1) luxury items, cars, boars, other luxuries

(1) income tax

Higher metro fares ; more & higher user fees

Any type of tax increase

State Income Tax

Income

State income tax allocated by population

Restructure entire tax system

Income tax

Sales tax

Income tax

Temporary tax surcharge on all taxes

(1) Income

Look at operating more like private industry to cut expense side

(1) Bottle tax

(4) Tax revenues go up but spending and governmnet employment seldom go down.

(1) Head tax on everyone in unincorporated areas

Is this to get through a rough patch? Taes should be for a specific time period and renewed if needed, except 36 & 37

(1) usage fees

(1) seek process efficiencies and lower costs

(1) Income tax

Sales tax: 70% per capita; 30% geographically

(1) Do not generally raise taxes

(1) cut xxxx employees, stremline like major corportation do!

(5) None

1- (1) secure additional revenue through pay back by end users by reduced payback or volunteerism (2) sell ad space on public documents & infrastructure

See answers T22, 23 & 24

(1) Income tax if property tax eliminated except in time of sale

(1) income tax

We need a state income tax - based on % of federal tax

(1) Income tax instead of all these little taxes

(T-39) ASSUMING that the County's elected leaders decided in the future that it was again necessary to reduce the County's labor costs to help balance a future budget, please indicate which ONE of the following choices you feel would be the best way to do that. Each option will likely reduce services.

(1) Lay off employees

(2) Implement unpaid "furlough days" for employees

(3) Reduce wages

(4) Reduce health insurance or other employee benefits

(5) Other

Abstain

Object

(5) create single payer system!

Reduce total compensation

(2) Eliminate redundant supervision-some employees answer to 2-3 "bosses". Cut administration. It is best paid employees need to take 2X furlough days

Need to take unpaid days and lower wages *cut back on OT (overtime) unnecessary spending

Blend of all would be best

Outsourcing of services w/ performance goals attached to contracts - particularly employment and social services contracts

None of these: leave unions alone!

(5) Accountability per job.

Labor is the backbone of society. Leave it alone.

All counties contribute to one health plan which would lower costs all around

1,2,3,4

(object) I don't accept premise that staff costs are the problem. But this is properly negotiated with unions, if so.

(object) Raise revenues & maintain services. No layoffs. No cuts.

Reduce the very high wages of the KC Administrator & Council members.

(5) more efficiencies than just these

Tax=funds for on-going project Levies= one time expenses

County income tax for its richest citizens

Adopt state health insurance reform (single-payer)

County should lobby Olympia to pass single-payer healthcare HB 1892

Single-payer health care

Some of 2,3,4

Change the way we do county business: 1 job share; - change hours so people start later work later and have time of x over; - reduce to 4 - 4.5 days work week and so on

(5) Address nepotism & favoritism hiring practices.

Many other people have had to deal w/ companies that have had to raise their portion of the cost of insurance as well as increase co-pay.

(5) eliminate unnecessary advisory councils & committees. Ex. HIV planning Council costing ~ \$250,000 per year. No longer federally mandated.

Study cost effectiveness of current salaries

(4) and also #2

(5) Implement unpaid "x" amount of "work days" for employees

(object) use some or all - silly to pick one.

Live within your means!

(4) Ask employees which - its' their jobs

Lay off / reduce pay of management rather than workers

Should not have taken over Metro

Utilization of all strategies included executive and management staff.

(2) Back off your front line employees. Look to the top & big ticket managers first. Always.

(5) A combination of all just like the private sector

(5) wage freeze- lower upper end salaries & "perks" for judges, executives, etc.

(5) Eliminate Wellness Assessment

GENERAL

Take back out airwaves. Community & access radio. Change from growth economy. Producing local energy. Producing local agriculture. Local banking.

The possible merging of services providers in the geographical King County was not covered. For example, should the KC Sheriff and Seattle Police Department be merged? Maybe we needed questions applying Metro to other areas.

Alternative energy used by city

I really think we need to talk about income tax and about the long-term If cutting programs in the short term (i.e.

family planning)

Would love to have a way to report ideas to you beyond yes or no on the opinionnaire

Concept is wonderful. I love the idea of meeting with others to discuss important issues, but topics should be more interesting. Would like stronger indication that elected officials are listening.

Since I think the overall system is broken, it's difficult to answer questions that are about the specifics that can only prolong what doesn't work.

Could address how objectives are achieved (not just what....) e.g. Incentives vs regulation

I'd like to see a discussion around issues, like: 1) decriminalize marijuana; 2) quit outsourcing jobs - rebuild technical competency; 3) Lower expectations for people - we are not a rich country anymore; 4) More transparency where our money goes; 5) what are "internal services"!

Next time, the subject of drug laws discrimination, of drug legalization of hemp (and/or marijuana), and other related topics -

3) less auditing more change the process!!

Eliminate the tax expenditure for the Port of Seattle

I am furious that I am paying for KC employees benefits, salaries at the "equivalent" of major cos in this area! If that is the case, then they should be subject to downsizing like the rest of us. I have been laid off 3 times in 30 years - xxxxx??! No

more taxes! More oversight - Less committees and more work

I think KC has spent too much money feathering its own nest & trying to justify its expanded existence. It's too big, too expensive, inefficient. Too many meetings that accomplish nothing. No firing for incompetence - 13,500 employees paid at a rate some people will never see & benefits like US Conaress. Enough! Pare Down -

Additional revenue sources could be obtained by (a) having end users of social services pay reduced cost of volunteer time (volunteerism could also lead to vocational ed.); (b) offer ad space on public documents and newsletters; (c) seek sponsors

from businesses for certain projects or services: (d) xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx (e) xxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Attention should be given to designing a sound revenue system. Property taxes are unrelated to cash flow making them least equitable often times. If property is to be taxed, it should be only when it changes ownership. Also funding for local services should move to state level for all essential services to avoid regional inequities.

About the Fast Forum® Technique and The Forum Foundation

Trailer Clause:

The Fast Forum® technique enables interested persons to more effectively and meaningfully communicate their individual opinions. By summarizing these opinions in written reports, the Fast Forum® technique communicates to participants the values in which they believe. This important information can then be communicated simultaneously to parent, teacher, school, religious, business, community, and government organizations, i.e., "the established leadership." The Fast Forum® technique is a product of the Forum Foundation and based on the research of its founder, Dr. Richard J. Spady. The Forum Foundation in Seattle, Washington, is a non-profit, educational, and research corporation dedicated to strengthening democratic processes through improved feedback communication. The Forum Foundation firmly believes that by improving feedback communication in this manner, society can reduce apathy, improve community well-being, and address better the problems and opportunities we all face together.

Philosophy:

A creative organization or society actively searches for visionary solutions to its problems. The open exchange and discussion of ideas through Zeitgeist Communication technology is the mortar that can bind organizations and society together during this creative process. This exchange, in turn, leads naturally toward improved decision-making, consensus, and spontaneous collaboration. Any organization or society that inhibits the free movement of ideas among its members up, down, and across their organizational and societal structures (innocently or not) is depriving itself of its greatest resource — human thought. Such an organization or society is in grave danger of being buried in history by the avalanche of the creativity of others.

Theory of Creativity:

Symbolic Dialogue among citizens and their leaders in all organizations, public and private through Many-To-Many Communication technology (whether in nations, states, counties, cities, schools, organizations, or places of worship), is similar to the creative processes of the Socratic Method. Administrative and civilization theories, as perceived by the people, are the "social algorithms" and social architecture that create the future for the human race.

Certification Clause:

Tabulation of the data contained in this report by the Forum Foundation, for its part in the process, is certified correct barring unintentional errors.

** For further information refer to this book: *The Leadership of Civilization Building: Administrative and Civilization Theory, Symbolic Dialogue, and Citizen Skills for the 21st Century* (Spady, Kirby, additional information about the research, services, or grants of the Forum Foundation, e-mail FastForum@mac.com or visit the website at <http://ForumFoundation.org>.

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